

## Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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DRAFTED BY NEA/ARN:TJCAROLAN:PDW

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

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FOLLOWING REPEAT LONDON 5788 ACTION AMMAN SECSTATE INFO JIDDA  
USCINCEUR 14 APR

QUOTE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LONDON 5788

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: MASS JO SU US

SUBJ: JORDANIAN PRIME MINISTER ON HAWK AIR DEFENSE

REF: AMMAN 1985

1. LONDON TIMES OF APRIL 14 CARRIES AN EXCLUSIVE INTER-  
VIEW WITH ZEID RIFAI BY ITS CORRESPONDENT EDWARD  
MORTIMER. STORY CARRIED ON P. 2 UNDER HEADLINE, "JORDAN  
SWITCHING US ARMS ORDER TO RUSSIA". PERTINENT EXTRACTS  
FOLLOW:

2. BEGIN TEXT: "JORDAN HAS ABANDONED ITS PLAN TO PUR-  
CHASE AN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM FROM THE UNITED STATES AND  
NOW INTENDS TO SEEK ONE FROM THE SOVIET UNION. THIS WAS  
STATED TO THE TIMES BY ZEID RIFAI, THE JORDANIAN PRIME  
MINISTER, IN AN INTERVIEW IN LONDON THIS WEEK.

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IN THE INTERVIEW MR. RIFAI SAID THE CANCELLATION OF

THE AIR DEFENSE DEAL--WHICH WOULD HAVE INVOLVED FOUR ADVANCED HAWK MISSILE BATTERIES AND 100 VULCAN GUNS WAS THE RESULT OF DELAYS CAUSED BY OPPOSITION FROM THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS. BY THE TIME CONGRESS FINALLY APPROVED THE DEAL, PRICES HAD RISEN TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT THE BILL PRESENTED TO JORDAN IN JANUARY OF \$729M (430 MILLION POUNDS) WAS MORE THAN DOUBLE THE ORIGINAL AMOUNT WHICH SAUDI ARABIA HAD AGREED TO FINANCE.

'THE SAUDIS DID NOT FIND IT POSSIBLE TO FINANCE THE WHOLE DEAL AT THE NEW PRICES, AND THEREFORE WE CONSIDER THE DEAL WITH THE UNITED STATES AS OFF', MR. RIFAI SAID. 'THE ONLY OTHER SOURCE WHICH COULD SUPPLY AN AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM AT REASONABLY MODERATE PRICES AND WITH AN ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY SCHEDULE WAS THE SOVIET UNION.'

COMPARABLE EUROPEAN SYSTEMS, HE SAID, WERE TOO EXPENSIVE AND WOULD TAKE TOO LONG TO DELIVER. 'THE ONLY OPTION NOW IS THE SOVIET UNION, AND WE PLAN TO REACTIVATE THE PRELIMINARY TALKS WITH THEM AS SOON AS WE RETURN.'

HE DID NOT EXPECT THE SAUDIS TO MAKE ANY DIFFICULTY ABOUT A SOVIET DEAL. THE AMERICAN DEAL WOULD CANCEL ITSELF AUTOMATICALLY WHEN THE TIME LIMIT FOR THE DOWN PAYMENT EXPIRED AT THE END OF THIS MONTH. JORDAN WOULD PROBABLY HAVE TO PAY BETWEEN \$10M AND \$12M IN DAMAGES FOR WORK WHICH HAD ALREADY STARTED." END TEXT.

ARMSTRONG

UNQTE. KISSINGER

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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